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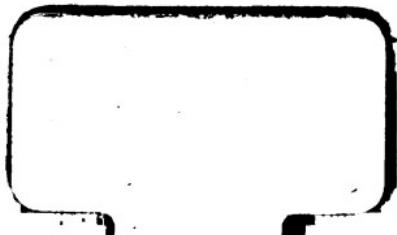


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FROM

Richard G. Parker,
of Cambridge.

18 Nov. 1862



Leathes

(cover)

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A Glimpse

A T

W A T E R T O W N .

BY A "NATIVE."



BOSTON :
1851.



A GLIMPSE

AT

W A T E R T O W N .

BY A "NATIVE."

Francis L. Tie.

"I come no more to make you laugh; things now
That bear a weighty and a serious brow,
Sad, high, and waking ——."

SHAKSPEARE.

BOSTON:

1851.

AL2349.4.15

1862, Nov. 18.

Gr. 15 of

Richard G. Parker -
of Cambridge.
(Born: 1817.)

P R E F A C E .

DUGALD STEWART says, "*Our dreams are influenced by the prevailing temper of the mind,*" and quotes as an instance:

" — Agit ipse furentem,
In somnis ferus *Æneas*, semper que relinqui,
Sola sibi, semper longam incomitata videtur,
Ire viam, et Tyrios desertâ quaerere terrâ."

In admitting this to be generally true, the author of the following pages feels bound to mention a single exception, which has occurred in his own personal experience. Before doing which, however, he will premise by stating, that from an actual phrenological survey of his cranium, by an itinerant artist who peddled "people's characters," done up in yellow covers, at the very low rate of one shilling, the fact was permanently established that his temperament was so far from being in the slightest degree *poetic*, that any attempt on his part at *rhyming* would meet with a most disastrous and mortifying defeat.

A few weeks since, at the close of a day spent in labor of a very prosaic nature, the author contrived to bring his mind to bear so exclusively upon subjects of a dry and uninteresting character, that he fell asleep in his chair, in which rather pleasant recreation he thinks he must have indulged for several hours, from the fact that when he awoke the fire had gone out and the candle had burnt to its socket. Upon collecting his somewhat deranged senses, he was impressed with the idea that he had been dreaming, and subsequent reflection

conduced to the belief that he had had a "Glimpse at Watertown" during his dream. A "lucifer," inflamed for the avowed purpose of aiding in the discovery of the precise locality of the bedstead, presented to him an object which, if not startling, was at least unexpected. Upon his table lay a quire of foolscap entirely written over. His first impulse, after reading a few lines, was to pronounce phrenology a humbug, and that he had been swindled out of a shilling. A moment's thought, however, served to convince him that though the Muse had favored him in his dreams, she had no idea of continuing her favors during his waking hours.

The following pages are an exact transcript of the manuscript found upon his table. In all criminal trials, (in these days of "spiritual knockings,") when everything else fails, and the case is altogether desperate, humanity suggests the plea of *somnambulism*. And certainly it is unreasonable to hold a man responsible for acts committed *while asleep*.

If then the reader finds fault with the rhyme, metre, sense, or sentiment, the author will only offer in defence that he does not consider himself in any degree responsible for acts committed by him while in a state of *somnambulism*.

A GLIMPSE AT WATERTOWN.

SOME soulless men, to gain an end —
Their own peculiar tastes approve,
Whom neither reason, shame can move,
Will all their strongest efforts bend —
Which shock e'en Satan to commend,
Their influence most unkindly lend,
That interest, morals, ne'er behoove.

To principle and interest blind,
Senseless, heartless, selfish, mean,
With souls impure and tongues unclean,
They ever watch to wound mankind,—
To enslave the soul and chain the mind
Of those who different are inclined,
Whoe'er to worth and virtue lean.

By envy, malice, avarice bent,
The deeds we most abhor, they show ;
Their very eyes with meanness glow ;
Their minds on selfish ends intent,
No threatening's loud their deeds prevent,

Their time in shameless labor spent,
The cure of sin no care to know.

Their god is gold, and gold makes worth—
They wish no better boon to gain,—
'Twill wipe from man the foulest stain;
'Twill hide the curse of moral dearth;
Make misery the cause of mirth;
To all the good of Heaven give birth,
Make us from sins of Hell abstain.

And O ye men, ye *soulless* men!
Ye soulless men I here chastise:
“Let not your angry passions rise,”
While I in detail here again,
Declare the deeds ye ought to ken,
Which help disgrace “the upper ten,”
Nor raise at this the least surprise.

The best of motives guide my hand,
While penning thus these measured lines;
But when I see the base designs
Which e'er appear at man's command,
In every clime, in every land,—
Designs the purest hearts to brand,
No will my just contempt confines.

When in the world a wrong appears,
No matter who the author be,

No matter what the author's plea,
Whene'er the monster vice uprears
Its hideous head which bites and sears,
Let no base motives rouse your fears —
Express your hatred bold and free.

Whene'er an honest man ye view
With lofty thoughts and feelings true,
Or high or low, or rich or poor,
Let him your best regards secure ;
O give an honest man his due,
I'm sure you'll not this action rue,
For of honest men there are but few
To tax your patience to endure.

And now ye men of WATERTOWN,
(For whom, in truth, these lines were penn'd,)
I pray your fixed attention lend ;
I know you'll fret, and snarl, and frown,
I know you'll wander up and down,
To find the author — if in town,—
But cease your ire, he'll not be kenned.

Your faults have long enough been known,
To be described in simple rhymes,
And spread abroad in other climes,
Lest you be in such folly grown,
And it by bitter fruits be shown,
That virtue from your homes has flown,
And left a scene of sins and crimes.

Ye critics, too, don't take the pains
To criticise these humble strains ;
 You ne'er can wound a man like me,
 Who makes no false pretence to be
A poet, counting for his gains,
And boasting of his gifted brains.
In me the love of virtue reigns,—
 Of real worth, of honesty.

Nor shall I sing of faults alone
 Which stalk abroad in all your streets ;
 Virtue shall with due praises meet.
The foulest soil that e'er was known
Is with some good intention sown,—
Some lonely flower has sometimes blown,
 And spread its fragrance pure and sweet.

Some "*Lot*" may in your precincts dwell,
 To save your name from utter hate,—
 Some few may much my scorn abate,
But let these lines your conscience tell,
To prize these friends of virtue well ;
For no reward their presence sell,
 But hold them in a high estate.

In good old times, in the ages that fade
In the ever alluring oblivion's shade,
A stern band of heroes, as ever were made,

Settled in Watertown quarters ;
With souls that were rare and bosoms to dare,
They left their homes, new fortunes to share,
To cross the tempestuous waters.

Then Watertown is of a good ripe age,
When its people should be consistent and sage,
In every improvement worth having, engage,
And approximate earthly perfection.
No laudable excuse can pardon her faults ;
Each casual visitor passing by halts,
And utters this bold interjection :

“ O shame ! that a people should e'er be so mean
As to suffer a village like this to be seen,
With houses so low and so rotten !
Are the people so lazy, so prideless, or poor,
As no better shelters than these to secure ?
Or can they no worthy improvement endure ?
Or miserly are they, or sotten ? ”

Many a flimsy old hovel, deep sunk in the mud,
That perchance may have stood since the time of
the flood,
Greets the eye as you enter the village,—
Where the young and old topers swallow their drink,
Seeking the foulest of ruins the brink ;
And miserly men, hands pocketed, wink,
With selfishness plain on their visage.

'Though the miser may sing and exult o'er his gain,
'Though joy for a time in his bosom may reign,
 And his household reëcho with laughter,
He soon will repay for the tears and the groans,
The children half fed, with their sharp piercing
 moans,
The heart-broken widow's disconsolate tones,
 And Satan will have him hereafter.

Ye miserly men, who in luxury roll,
Have ye ne'er learned that man has a soul ;
That virtue and goodness are paid as the toll
 To enter the regions Elysian ?
What boots it your wealth ?—'T will be squandered
 when dead,
'Mong men who despise you and hate you, be
 spread ;
 And your name will be held in derision.

Unsocial town, with your hoarded-up wealth,
For *money* neglectful of virtue and health —
 For *money* you struggle and labor ;
Shut up in your pens, in your own selfish mind,
To the true end of life unwittingly blind,
Forgetting there be such a thing as mankind,
 “ To love as thyself thy neighbor.”

No cordial reception, no strong grasp of hand,
Nor the kind look of friendship, nor courtesy bland,

Are seen when people are meeting ;
But the cold, distant bow, most fashionably made,
A cruel forced smile, seeming to upbraid,
Or commend the one met, according to his grade,
Is the upshot of Watertown greeting.

Each clique has a wall, as thick and as high
As the light wingéd fancy can easily fly,—

With no ladders on earth that can scale them ;
And the green eye of jealousy deforms every face,
And fretting suspicion with direful grimace,
Lurks with his brother, pale envy, apace,
With the false pride of wealth to avail them.

Money, 'tis true, is a comfortable thing,—
'Twill the "good things of life" abundantly bring ;
'Twill furnish both *honor and station*.

But the strong love of gold, when carried to excess,
Is more like to curse the possessor than bless ;
'Twill the sphere of humanity ever aggress,
And often has ruined a nation.

It makes no man better, nor worse, to be sure ;
But why curse a man because he is poor,
Or because his position be humble ?
For station is fleeting, and fortune not sure,—
You are wealthy to-day, to-morrow are poor,
To-day are contented with your rich worldly store,
To-morrow may murmur and grumble.

What profit thy virtue, thy talents or worth,
While money, their rival, remains on the earth,—

What profit thy earthly perfection ?
No force has the power of a pocket of gold,
No means make the heart of the hero so bold,
No cause, to support you, such friends has enrolled,
No sin less sought for correction,

Than the blind sin of avarice, increased by success.
What powerful means mankind to oppress !

What means of false independence !
A neighbor's a dog, a friend but a slave,
The world but a cipher, not worthy to save ;
The parson's a toady, the lawyer's a knave,
And all are in servile attendance,

To the miser who dotes on his ill-gotten gains,
Though a vile ignoramus and shallow his brains,
Though his heart be a nest of corruption.
We well may be proud, that men of renown
Should have some control o'er the affairs of the town ;
But the right to assume, *to trample men down*,
Is *not* a logical deduction.

Pray open your purse for the good of the poor ;
Let not the gay world your senses allure,—
Let the true end of life your efforts secure,
And win for yourself commendation.
Wear less, eat less, live cheaper, and give

To the needy, that *they* in comfort may live,—
And strive to diffuse education.

To your schools, I pray, give a casual glance,
And labor the human condition to advance,
For surely 'twill prosper the nation ;
Don't worry the pedagogue, striving to earn
A subsistence, for wishing your children to learn ;
Don't force him, I pray you, for heaven to yearn,
With pitiless tantalization.

The pedagogue's fate ! What pity he needs !
How freely his patience incessantly bleeds !
How haggard and gaunt are his features !
Both parents and children are ever his foes,
No sympathy warm for soothing his woes,—
The tide of his life e'er gloomily flows—
The most unenvied of creatures.

O that men had the wisdom to know
What thoughts in the mind of the passer-by glow,
From the street they have so much neglected ;
For the index of mind, of culture, of heart,
Is found in the buildings, *in toto* or part,
Of morals, religion, of science, of art,
Or whate'er with good is connected.

A school-house,¹ 'tis true—large, handy, and neat,
With teachers well-fitted, and furnace complete,

Is built to Watertown's credit.
And a large, spacious Town-House, ready for use,
For balls, nigger concerts, or any abuse,
But *papists*,² for they have morals too loose :
At least the people have said it.

The Fire Department ! the *boast of the town* !
The *pride of the people*, of fame or renown,
The very *quintessence of wonders* !
With *hand ever ready* the element to quench,
Though water, like rivers, their bodies do drench,
They firmly the brake *pugnaciously clench*,—
'Though the flame incessantly thunders.

At the sound of alarm, every man's on his feet,
Though late be the hour, and intense be the heat,
'Gainst the devouring element dauntless.
The engine in order for constant "RELIEF,"
No swearing profane to kindle your grief,
The duty of giving assistance is chief,
And personal exploits are countless.

All the members well-drilled, with the fire-hook
and hose,
Win the praise of spectators, as the water high flows,
And falls in such sparkling profusion ;
And the engine's fine structure so great is its fame,
Attracts from afar all the firemen to claim

The right to a model to extinguish the flame ;
For others are scarce worth allusion.

Now rattling o'er the iron paved course,
Puffing and snorting, comes the grim steam-horse,
Wending bold its way, shaking up and down,
Its destined goal, benighted Watertown.

The cars are splendid, with costly trimmings fine,
The track, for all the world, the nearest an air line.
But cars, said I, splendid with trimmings fine ?
Than people, far better fit are they for swine ;

Though cars, they leak, and loosened windows
rattle,
Like noisy weapons on the field of battle ;
When winds do blow, though seats worn-out and
hard,
No comfort, ease, to passengers afford ;
'Though rain comes pouring through the leaky
blind,
'Though in the stove no cheerful fire you find,
'Though ever halting at countless stations there,
And cinders thick come burning through the air ;

Though of crooks and turns the whole concern is
made,
And bumps and thumps for riding fare is paid,
A mild conductor, of kind and generous soul,

For all these numerous faults make up the whole ;
“ As meek he is as Moses,” urbane, refined,
For ample fee to generous deeds inclined.
’Though stocks should sink, pray show no great
surprise,
So kind conductors woold cause the stocks to rise.

Now preachers, now churches, awhile be my theme,
The skim milk I’ve curdled, I now take the cream—
One of the redeeming features ;
Most worthy divines all lab’ring for good,
To make people do as good people should,
Offering grace and religion for food,
To impenitent, poor sinning creatures.

One free, open-hearted, independent and bold,
Determined, for no paltry sum, to be sold,
Though “ *fifteen sixteenths* ” be grieved !
His honest convictions he e’er will maintain,
’Though base maledictions be all that he gain,
And Satan’s “ *not angry but grieved* ” in vain,
And many an insult’s received.

Another, quite social, liberal, and kind,
With talent, and zeal, and goodness combined,
With no false vanity to weaken his mind,
To the cause of religion devoted.
Another, a friend to humanity’s cause,

To temperance, and morals, and equitable laws,
For love *universal* quite noted.

The other two pastors, who make up the five,
For the cause of religion most zealously strive,
With humble pretensions and feelings.
Why stalk, then, such evils, while teachers so pure
Are daily endeavoring these evils to cure ?
Beelzebub's legions are here to allure
From truth and honorable dealings.

How, like senseless shadows, flee away
The many notions of a former day !
A different age quite different men produce,
And makes of other times but little use ;
The good fast falls to premature decay,
The bad soars high for undivided sway ;
How shall I touch on such a mournful theme,
And make the truth in all its features seem ?

When science, art, engage the public zeal,
To work and propagate the general weal ;
When human progress onward wends along,
And public enterprise incites the throng,
'Tis then we smile and bid the world "God speed,"
And fain would loud commend each worthy deed ;
Then hopes of future within our breasts will leap,
And stir the soul long since inclined to sleep.

I love to hear the cry of freedom's cause,
I love an honest loyalty to laws,
I love an honest thought, a courage bold,
An honest life to no base purpose sold ;
But when I see the hand of man efface
The olden relics of a former race,
'Tis then my mind recoils ; in vain I sigh
For times and men long long ago gone by.

A single spire once pointed to the sky,
Where all in hand and heart assembled nigh,
And knelt in pure devotion to their God,
And with one voice their tuneful praises sung ;
Around the same communion-table spread,
They drank the wine and ate the sacred bread ;
And when the preacher's words upon them stole,
They felt the truth, " There is in man a soul."

Religion, then, was not an artful farce,
To give respectability to the mass ;
Men went not then to church to nod and sleep,
But went to bend in reverence pure and deep ;
No party, sect, disturbed their pious thoughts,
Nor waked the hate with bitter evils fraught ;
All trod one path, together heaven-ward bent,
Joined hand in hand, by no divisions rent.

Methinks I see once more that Church³ arise,
That ancient spire uptowering to the skies ;

The bell still rings in mem'ry's faithful ear,
And all the forms like those of old appear.
No time, that tower, can from my mind efface,
Crazy and gray, for bats the dwelling place ;
Those numerous aisles that passed from pew to pew,
Come fresh as yester to my gladdened view.

Those latticed pews, with backs erect and quaint,
And countless windows within my mind I paint ;
The sounding-board high o'er the preacher's head
Who o'er the heart such sacred influence shed ;
The broad-brimmed hats that hung upon the wall,
All these, and more upon my memory fall ;
The preacher's voice, again rejoiced, I hear,
As when it fell upon my childhood's ear.

Methinks I see that pious throng once more,
Through all those aisles to their devotions pour ;
And now, how still becomes each humble soul,
When at the hour the bell hath ceased to toll.
The choir to God now sing their songs in praise,
And anthems loud in cadence sweetly raise.
A solemn sight presents itself to view,
And pictures many a form with pious heart and true.

Gone, gone, are those venerable relics of old,
That so many scenes of devotion unfold,
And the heroes now lie 'neath the cold damp sod,
Where in purity, love, they worshipped their God.

Now gaze on the spires that rise to your view,
Do they point to a God, or a heaven more true ?
Is the cause of religion more fervently fought,
And the true end of life more earnestly sought ?

How sighs the pure spirit, when mem'ry recalls
Those "ages of gold." How droopingly falls
The hope once cherished of the progress of man.
Now flames of dissension the cold breezes fan ;
The o'erheated passions from their caverns now start,
And love and religion from the bosom depart ;
No more pure devotion at the altar now kneels,
Nor love in the bosom of mortals reveals.

Now how reluctant, full of awe,
I here commence the solemn theme,—
A portrait *sad* but *true* to draw,
What I a horrid feature deem.
Here *slander* stalks in every street,
With feigned composure on its face,
It seems with pleasure all to greet,
Yet seeks to heap on man disgrace.

Whoe'er by chance has stepped aside,
The rigid test of virtues laws,
Must e'en the worst of ills abide,
'Pon him the tribe of slander draws.
Whoe'er by chance success should gain
By labor, toil, by worth or wit,

Will rouse the envy of slander's train,
And reap the blasting fruits of it.

No man, however penitent,
Whoe'er has strayed from virtue's path,
'Though all his life 's in penance spent,
Must e'er expect to escape the wrath
Of those whom envy marks its own,—
Must e'er expect their esteem to gain.
The tale is in a mournful tone,
It gives the soul the deepest pain.

A man, perchance like others, frail,
To some gay, foolish faults inclined,
May by his early habits fail
The proper course of life to find ;
Begin to fall from rectitude,
From his once laudable career,
Debase the mind by God endued,
His own destruction bringing near ;

Still sinking down, still sinking down,
No friendly hand to raise him up,
But sinking under many a frown,
And none to snatch the bitter cup
In which he drinks his dire disgrace,—
In which he drinks an early grave ;
And stern remorse and ruin base,
To which he makes himself a slave.

Is there no friendly hand to aid
A fellow being from the mire ?
Will yet the hand of *love* be stayed ?
Do men to deeds of *love* aspire ?
“ No ! rather kick him down,” they say,
“ And push him further from our sight ;
Man, good or bad, may have his way,
To this he has undoubted right.”

But yet, with still some sense of shame,
The fallen man attempts to rise,—
To gain once more his long lost name,
To gain esteem in other’s eyes.
With strong intent he eager toils,
His long contracted faults to mend,
Nor from his purposes recoils,
But onward e’er his footsteps tend.

And fortune now begins to smile
Upon his toil, and for a time
His slanderers cease his fame revile,
And help to raise him from the slime
Where habit forced him long to lie ;
And step by step he nears the goal
Of reformation. He raises high
The proud ambition of his soul.

Contempt of men no longer drives
Him from the noble walks of life,—

In honest purposes he thrives,
And hope exhorts him in the strife.
His neighbors meet him with a smile
Upon their lips, to cheer him on ;
And plenty fills his board the while,
And happiness comes streaming on.

Oh, where's the heart so hard, so *base*,
So *leprous* with its own conceit,
That would not all the past erase,
That would not sympathetic beat
In gladness, that a fellow man
Had been from degradation saved ? —
That would not give a ready hand
To welcome back a soul depraved ?

And yet there be, and strange to say,
Those so devoid of humanity,
Who would the victim back convey,
To its abjured insanity !
And as the eagle, with its claws
Pounces on its unconscious prey,
So they with slander without cause,
Bear the victim's name away.

They hate to see a fellow rise
From humble rank to station high,—
Who fortune's stern caprice defies,
And makes caprice with him comply.

But view but once the blackened hearts
Of *those who others criticise* ;
See how the mind with horror starts,
And what corruption in them lies !

Deeds blackened by infernal fires,
Are written there in symbols strong ;
There envy pale, and base desires,
And selfishness and motives wrong ; —
There conscience, scathed in double steel,
Sits quiet, free from keen remorse,
And avarice, seeking earthly weal,
Stands counting o'er a filthy purse.

There falsehood lurks in comely garb,
And speaks in most benignant tones ;
And slander, too, with poisoned barb,
Is laughing o'er its victim's groans.
Can human hearts such aspects bear ? —
Such foul distortion make appear ;
Can man, with such presumption, dare
To show a soul so insincere ?

Who are these base and craven souls,
Who seek with zeal mankind to scan ?
He who in wealth and luxury rolls,
And gains it all from brother man ;
He who flatters before your face,
And *slanders you behind your back* ;

Who seeks to win with fawning grace,
With pious look, but bosom black.

Some, too, alas ! far better fit
To scan their *own* relation's faults !
Can *they*, to slander coolly sit,
While vice upon *their threshold* halts ?
Verily, it has of truth been said,
“ Man is to his own failings blind,—
Man's by the basest motives led,
Is e'er mistrustful of his kind.”

Misnomers, too, on every side
Appear, and God, their Maker, mock ;
The more they try their faults to hide,
The more, alas, our feelings shock ;—
Who take at church the bread and wine,
Their own damnation freely drink,
And bow abroad at Satan's shrine,
In deep and rank pollution sink ;

Who leave their wives at home to weep,
And pure and sacred love profane ;
Who spend the night while others sleep,
In gathering in the *gambler's* gains.
Base-hearted souls ! correct your faults,
'Ere Satan comes with legion bold,
Your *own* beloved home assaults,
And wraps you in his clammy fold !

Hypocrites ! who hide in "*floods of tears*"
The spiteful malice of their hearts ;
And when within the court appears
The culprit, sad and full of doubts,
What feigned reluctance here is seen
The deed to tell, the crime to prove ;
For hearts so *foul*, so base, unclean,
Such sobs and sighs can ne'er behoove.

Yes, hypocrites ! *so void of brains*,
Of culture, too, so destitute,
Within whose breasts such passion reigns,
They lose the *man* and act the *brute*.
Their *arguments* are *ruffian blows*,
For reason fair they find no room ;
Experience in sad monition shows,
That they *may* meet the *felon's doom*.

Office seekers ! whose heads have grown
White, by vain, officious zeal ;
Whose paths, with disappointment sown,
No ample, sure reward reveal.
And now *impulsive*, *rash*, severe,
Ill-tempered at their own defeat,
Go scowling, growling, far and near,
Like snarling puppies in the street.

No more to "*Uncle Sam*" they 'll turn,
To fill their purses with his gold,

No more their golden hopes will burn
For station, *office*, rank to hold;
But now on “acres few” retired,
From *fruitless search* for office high,
With ire and disappointment fired,
They vent their spleen with many a sigh.

Those Misanthropes ! with souls so damned,
So dried, incarnate, black, and spare,
That any assay their bulk to expand,
Will send their fragments through the air.
“Reformers all, but one idea
Possess,” they say. The reason’s plain,
They’ve no idea at all, and here
They show their envy by their spleen.

Those, too, who robbed their neighbor’s name,
By perjury and guilty wrong,—
Those “LIARS NINE,” who impeached the fame
Of one in truth and honor strong ;
He who taught that “*crows bars swim*,”
The *peaches* plucked by midnight search,
While shone without the candle dim ;
Who robbed of coal the parish church !

Oh, who would thus a slanderer be,
Reaping nothing for his labors !
Oh, who can have an honest plea,
Talking falsely of his neighbors !

Oh, who would practice foul deceit,
Seeking office, fame, or station ?
Oh, who would his own neighbor cheat
Of his honest reputation ?

I'd rather be a fleecéd gander,
Feeding humbly in the mire ;
I'd rather be a salamander,
Roasting in the blazing fire,
Than ever breathe a word of slander
On my neighbor's honest fame ;—
Than my precious time to squander,
Making libels on a name.

O *hideous* monster ! beneath whose blighting breath
Victims pure and stainless lay low in death,
What form hast thou ? Art robed in what disguise ?
We would but know thee, to thyself despise.
Where lurkest thou ? In what secreted haunt ?
To drive thee thence let no vain terror daunt.
Thy venom'd tongue like scorching fire-brand burns,
To every path thy hissing weapon turns.

In every form, in every aspect loathed,
Thyself art found in sleekish costume clothed ;
Whate'er the station, whate'er the age or name,
Thy trade perfidious is ever found the same.
Thy form art seen in fair and beardless youth ;
Stript of thy garb, how foul, impure, uncouth !

In grey old age, a fitter time to think
Of death, the grave in which you soon must sink.

Encouched in *female* garb, with agile tongue,
How many slanderous words are basely flung !
'Tis said that woman vile so much must say,
Or good or bad, their tongues the same obey ;
The rich and poor alike thee homage pay,
Alike with bloody hands the victims slay ;
The high and low, with thee their battles fight,
And scourge their kind, secure from mortal sight.

If thou' wouldest meet thy victim, face to face,
No honest name thou'd surely then abase ;
Wound not thy foe on his defenceless back ;
Seek not unknown the vile assassin's trade,
Who strikes the blow, secure by nightly shade ;
But stand forth bold, no coward heart display,
And let thy deeds be shown by light of day.

See'st not thy victim writhing 'neath thy darts ?
Hear'st not the groans which come from stinging
smarts ?
Now see ! he looks from whence the arrows came,
No foe he sees, by whose unerring aim
His body bleeds. On every side his eyes
Turn to the ambush, where his foeman lies,—
As Nisus, when in the thicket hid,
Thou dost, O Scandal, safe defiance bid !

Now see, he flies ! he's goaded on to flight ;
Behold him in forlorn, unenvied plight !
On every side his faltering steps he turns ;
Yet still the dart its fameless victim burns.
His visage pale, a mournful story speaks,
And all in vain one kindly friend he seeks,
'Till wan despair comes thick'ning o'er his brow,
Compelled at last in meek submission bow.

There lived a man, in modern times,
Within our little village proud,
Who, though not charged with heinous crimes,
Deserves contempt and censure loud ;
He's omnipresent, omniscient too,—
With eyes that pierce the thickest veil,
And ears that hear both false and true,
A tongue that babbles every tale.

He knows the secrets of your homes,
The secrets even of your hearts,—
And where your wandering footsteps roam
You 'll see appear his wily arts.
He sees you at your private hearth,—
What food is on your table spread ;
He sees, wherever be your path,
The hour you seek repose in bed.

You'll see his sharp and piercing eyes
Within the cars, as swift they fly ;

Nor seek that piercing eye to shun,—
It gathers every deed that's done ;
By day or night, where'er you go,
His busy mind is sure to know ;
The lenses clear that grace his mien
But serve to make his eyes more keen !

Methinks I see him in my sleep
Within my private chamber peep,
And there inscribe on numerous reams
The tales I utter in my dreams ;
His steps I hear behind my back,
Following close upon my track ;
I see him in my daily toil,
And fain would from his sight recoil.

Good people ! if you wish to know
 The faults committed in your life ;
What you are doing here below,
 With what your future days are rife ;
If your own business you wish to learn
 Better than you yourself can tell,
I pray to this omniscient turn ;—
 He'll know your avocation well.

Go to him and learn the news,
 He's fresher than the telegraph ;
On every theme he's ready views,—
 Of science, art, a worthy staff.

Within his mind he has a store
Of knowledge, pure and classic lore ;
But where his *facts* and news he drew
Would puzzle man and devil too !

The temperance cause ! that cause God speed !
Why make it thus so freely bleed ?
Why battle thus a cause so pure,
That frees from dissipation's lure ;
That teaches man he is a man,
That drives from earth the foulest ban ?
Why bawl so loud, for conscience sake,
That it from you your freedom takes ?
Why say ye thus, ye have no need
To sign the pledge ? In vain you plead
“There is no chance for *you* to fall.”
Sad, sad examples on you call,
And tell that man but little knows
How fast the downward path he goes.
Sin strews its path with fragrant flowers,
That guile away the fleeting hours ;
A fragrant flower may bloom in spring,
But bitter fruits the autumn brings.
The man who says he knows no fear
Of his destruction lurking near,
Is egotistic, insane, or fool,
Thinks past no data for a rule,—
That causes are quite all the same,

Differing only in the name.
He who says he has no wish
To save a fellow from the ditch,
Is base, inhuman, selfish, mean,
A monster — hideous, foul, unclean.
Oh, would that man could feel his soul
Was drowning in the drunkard's bowl !
Oh, could he hear the cries and woes
That ride on every wind that blows !
O ye would-be-privileged class,
Who drink at times your social glass,
Think by your bad example set,
A thousand run to ruin yet ;
Your good example yet may save
A thousand from the drunkard's grave.
How woful 'tis to look around
And see the life that drunkards lead,—
To hear the groans and sighs resound,
To see the broken heart to bleed.
Our heart-strings beat to hear the sighs,
To watch the faltering, trembling gait,
To see those red and blood-shot eyes,
Portending all a drunkard's fate.
It pains me, too, to think that those
Who have a precious soul to save,
Are adding only to their woes,
And digging deep an early grave :
A grave not only for the clay,
For which the bells untimely toll,

It is the grave eternal, aye,
The grave damnation of the soul.
But when parents thus we see
Drinking in their children's gaze,
Teaching them from vice to flee,
Yet persisting in their ways,
Then we see the untimely fate
Their own unhappy offspring wait.

Ye temperance men, awhile on you I pause,—
Don't by your hasty acts destroy your cause ;
Deal justly, mildly, with your fellow man,
Nor let force do what moral suasion can.
You find in man a doubly mortal foe,
When by your acts he 's made his ire to show ;
Read human nature by human systems wrought,
See how the heart 's by fiery passions fraught ;

How it by hate and selfish interest fed,
Will pour its fire on your devoted head ;
For man in heart is something like a hog,
And will your cause by his resistance clog.
By kindness, love, your laurels strive to win,
For kindness, love, to heavenly power are kin ;
Nor in your victory let your cause be stained,
Nor be your cause by persecution gained.

Intolerance, too, in actions mean and strong,
Is sure to increase the tide of public wrong.

Contemn not man *in toto* for his trade,
Since few vile things his daily life degrade ;
Men seek subsistence, whatever means they use,
'Though better far perchance they well may choose ;
Their sin is avarice, and money all their end,
This sin makes deeds that most we reprehend.

The deeds we hate are most legitimate,
And rise from love of gold immoderate.
The same rank fault's in many a bosom cold,
And many a soul is eaten up by gold ;
But yet withal beneath this gnawing sin
A sense of honor there may dwell within,—
A gentle hint, a kind yet stern rebuke
Will touch the heart, dispel the vilest look.

Harsh persecution, 't is itself a sin,
And hurts the cause we mostly strive to win ;
It causes wrath, excites the stubborn mind,
And renders man to right and reason blind ;
It nerves the arm to hot and zealous hate,
Calls forth the man, his pride of self inflates ;
Then thousand wrongs spring up the hands to curse,
That moved the deeds whereby their cause is lost.

'Tis vain, and foolish, too, for man to think
To drive the drunkard from his daily drink ;
The strictest law that e'er a mortal made
Abundant means are always found to evade.

What gained the cause, when oft the paltry fine
Annoyed the dealer in the poison wine ?
What drunkard 's saved by your unenvied tasks,
By hunting landlords hid among their casks ?

Full well I recollect those stubborn few,
That righteous ire and indignation drew
Upon their course, so hasty, indiscreet,—
The glorious cause sustained a half defeat.
No motives, pure at heart, impelled the deed ;
But shallow brains, by constant war, must need
Cause agitation, in their hopes forlorn,
Or in the world their “ occupation 's gone.”

Once moral suasion formed a noble plan
To rid of monstrous evils all the land ;
“ The cause ” advanced, and bright the prospect
grew,
The sale of rum would vanish from the view ;
No unkind words incensed the stubborn heart,
The end was sought by every gentle art ;
But “ Legal Force,” with hands in malice stained,
Destroyed the steps which “ Moral Suasion ” gain'd.

Ye “ Sons of Temperance,” be sure not overdo ;
Be moderate, candid, just, discreet and true ;
Far better deeds should all your actions stamp,
Nor let mis-steps your noble efforts cramp.

Can you forget what gave your Order birth ?
Was 't not to engender *love* and real worth ?
Was 't not to stifle *envy, malice, hate,*
And every jealous feeling dissipate ?

What 's in your name ? I oft am forced to ask
Why thus your aim in such disguises mask ; —
Are ye called " *Secret*," and still like wildfire fly
Your secret acts throughout the vaulted sky ?
Who plays the *Judas*, the " *awful secrets*" sends
With telegraphic speed to utmost ends ?
Who, " puffed with gas," his frothy humor brawls,
Who on his knees, like loathsome toadies, crawls ?

What herald bold parades through Boston streets,
And violates his oath to every man he meets ?
What luckless names on " *heated gridirons*"
scorch ?
What blood is shed on scandal's gory porch ?
Who drives the " *goat*" with " *brother's*" errors
lade ?
Whose zealous pains with rank revenge are paid ?
Know, brothers, know your deeds are all revealed,
For deeds liks yours can never be concealed.

If a brother fail, why such revenge display ?
Show rather sadness than malice, hate convey ;
Rouse not *suspicion*, 't will fearful ravage spread,
And spend its venom'd fury on a blameless head ;

Suspicion, however pure the victim be,
Oft stains a name to all eternity ;
For some so vile, unjust and hard of heart,
Will credit any tale the lying tongue may start.

Nor are the " Sons " without their meed of praise,
Nor shall I close these unpretending lays,
Without assay to sing their merits due ;
Joined hand in hand with hearts united true,
They pledge to heal a " brother's " worldly woe,
And kindness on the wretched head bestow ;
The fallen man here finds a generous friend,
'Gainst foes and wrong e'er ready to defend.

Ye strugglers in the noble cause
Of Temperance ! To you one word
Let me address ; a moment pause,
And let a friendly voice be heard ;
Feed not despair, nor slack the nerve,
Nor stay the zeal that wins the prize,
Nor from your path of honor swerve ;
But let your voice to heaven arise.

Your cause triumphantly will lead
To honor, health, and peace, and fame ;
In you no rank remorse will feed
Upon your vitals ; nor 'll squalid shame
Upon your features loathsome creep,
Nor draw the finger harsh of scorn,—

No voice of human woe thy sleep
Disturb, nor bring the bitter morn.

Fight on, and crush the ignoble foe ;
Thy noble banner in the breeze
Let float, and strike, with blow on blow,
The hideous monster ! hurl him low !
Strike for the cause of human woe,—
Strike for your homes and firesides bright,
And victory from your strife will flow,
For God will speed the cause of right.

And now ye men of worth, of you in praise
I sing, in humble kind but heartfelt lays ;
The few redeeming traits in you are found,
That shall, where'er these strains appear, resound.
A generous heart shall not remain unsung,
While justice, truth, possess a grateful tongue ;
Your noble deeds in contrast wide appear,
And honest men, with homage bold revere ;
In you we meet no harsh, repulsive frown,
To wound the heart, and modest worth cast down ;
A ready hand, an ever winning smile,
To cheer the heart exempt from pride or guile ;
No harsh reproof escapes your honored lips,
To him who sore and hard misfortune sips ;
The suffering poor your generous favors own,—
'T was you who dried the tears in kindly tones.

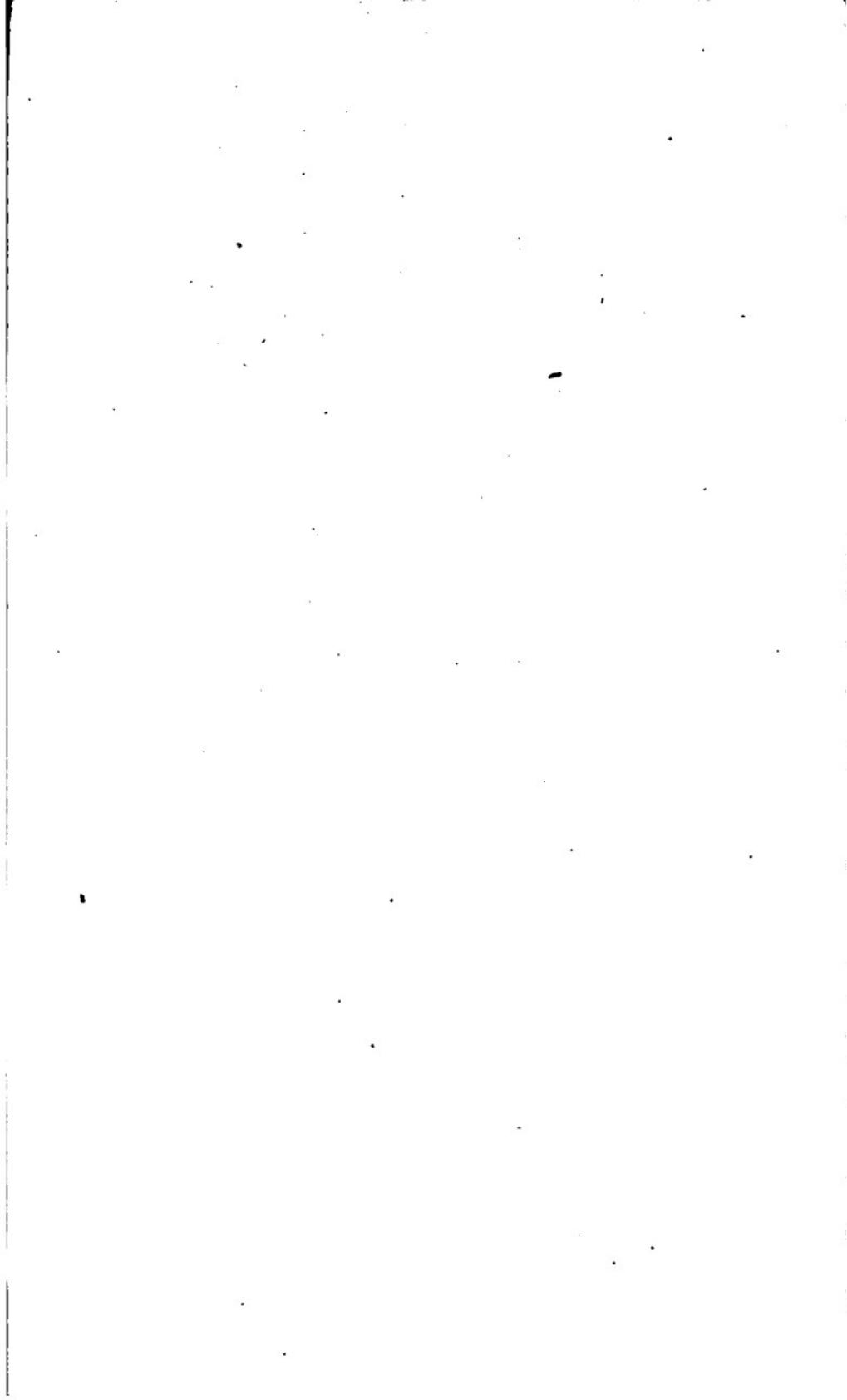
The orphan poor, and widowed mother, too,
Shout loud their thanks, and point a friend in you.
No avarice mean pollutes thy noble heart,
For objects good, inclined to do your part.
More worthy bards to sing your praise are due,
And help exalt the generous heart and true.
Would other men thy example imitate,
And raise their town from its unenvied fate.
May you at last in ripe and hale old age,
Reach heaven safe and grace your Maker's page.

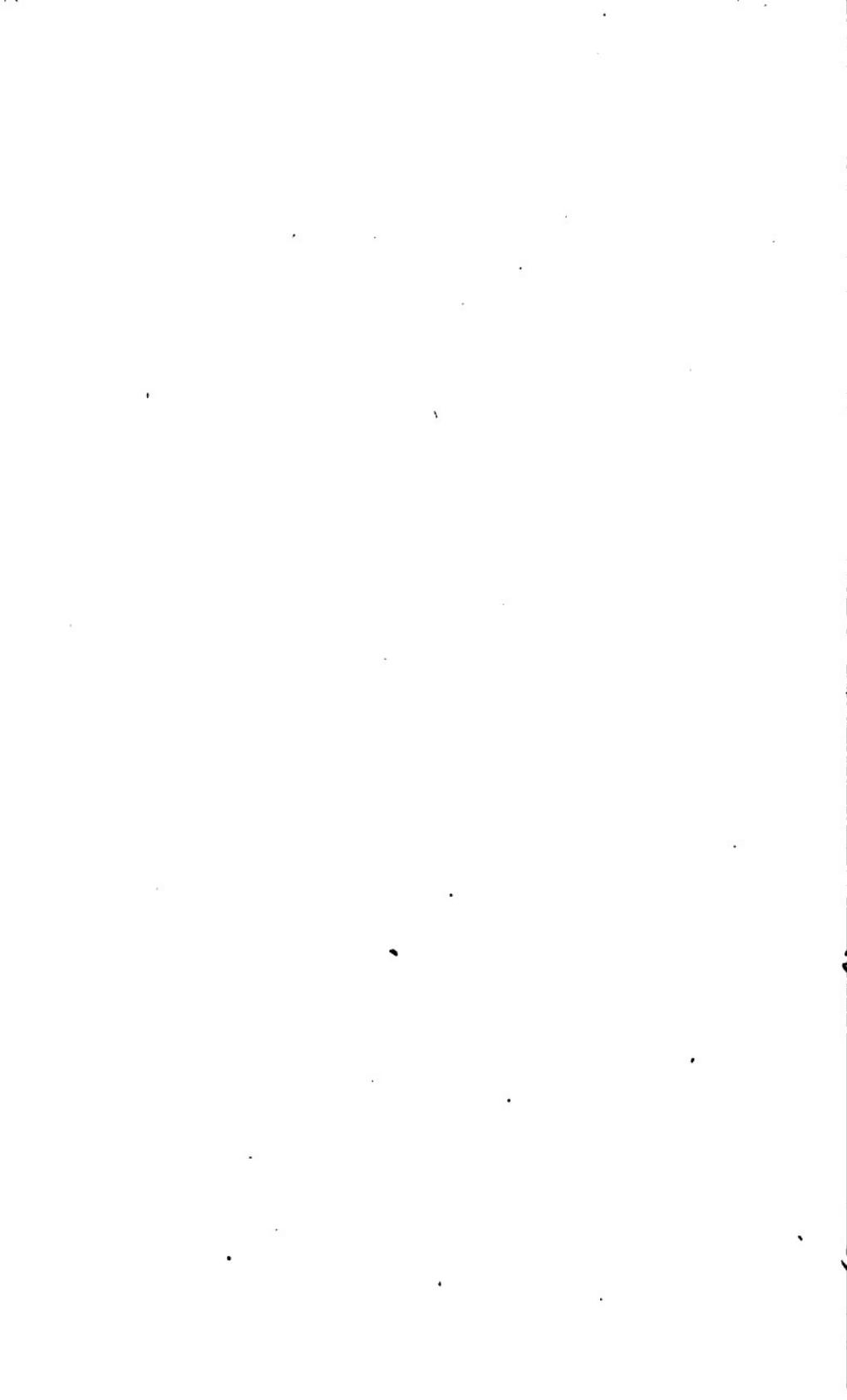
Thou Temperance Champion ! of WHITE and spotless name,
In thy own heart thou need'st no higher fame,—
Who seek'st to raise from sin and misery's paths
The wretched man to warm and happy hearths ;
Thou glut'st not o'er a fallen, ruined man,
Nor with malediction his errors scan ;
Thou think'st that man, by nature weak and frail,
In every strife is liable to fail ;
Thou show'st in thee a kindred spirit dwells,
Which friendship true and kindly deeds impels ;
Thou hatest sin of every form and kind,
That tends to oppress the weak, or enslave the mind.
Reform ! Reform ! thy e'er reëchoing cry,
Comes forth in tones uprising to the sky.
Could every land thy voice be made to hear,—
Could every heart thy warning learn to fear,—
Could every mind be made in truth to feel

The proper measures for the public weal,—
Could man but feel 'tis not the empty purse
That brings the blight on man, the burning curse,—
Could men but feel in education sound,
The best resource of weal and worth is found,—
Could men, like thee, in noble works engage,
How brighter far would be their history's page !
What better boon, who 'd ask a better shrine
Than that which comes from friendship to mankind ?
No stern remorse will mar thy blissful mind,
Nor steal the conscious joy thou 'lt surely find.
What though thou meet 'st with sharp and scornful
jeers ?
What though loud threats reecho in thy ears ?
What though the red-nosed force of Alcohol,
Beset thy path most hideous to appal,
And tar and feathers fly as thick as hail,
Or tar is sent, neat bottled up, like ale !
What though the cowhide inflicts its stinging smart,
And midnight flames your dreamy visions start ?
They 'll only serve to strengthen your resolve,
In stronger nets your spleenful foes involve,
And test your faith, and show more fully, too,
In danger's path you are the hero true.
No moderate strife will make in honor rise
Thy gilded name triumphant to the skies ;
To crush a feeble foe no honor gives,
But he who fights the strong in glory lives.

Here, then, I pause to bid the Muse farewell,
Upon my theme the while let others dwell ;
The solemn theme may well the Muse inspire,
And fill the thoughtful mind with sacred fire ;
For how the heart in secrecy revolts,
To feel the weight and sting of public faults.
Be this my plea, for this attempt at song —
To check the rapid tide of human wrong.
No “ storied urn,” nor transitory fame,—
No paltry praise from human lips I claim ;
A common sufferer in this world of woe,
Enjoins the Muse in gushing streams to flow.
’Though rough the tide, and harsh the billows roar,
And waves come beating ’gainst the rocky shore,
Yet waters pure, in channels deep and clean,
Are gliding onward to the ocean green ;
So shall my verse, though tuneless, rough, uncouth,
Within its flow bear purity and truth.
To rid a nation of its heinous crimes,
Let poets bawl and shout in satire rhymes ;
Reformers, too, raise high your voices hoarse,
And drive this town from out its sinful course.
In hopes to reap success, I look at home ;
To encounter wrongs, man need not *distant* roam.
Here I began, here let my labors close,
And let my pen enjoy a brief repose.

THE END.





N O T E S.

1. The School-House recently erected in the Middle District, is one of the finest structures of its kind in the vicinity. As a specimen of architecture, it does great credit to the Committee under whose superintendence it was erected ; while in its internal arrangement and admirable adaptation to the purposes for which it was constructed, it will compare favorably with the School-Houses of Boston, and other large cities.
2. The Selectmen of Watertown *refused* the Minister of the Catholic Church the use of the Town-Hall for a few Sabbaths, for the purposes of worship, although a considerable portion of his large and respectable congregation were *legal voters* and *tax-payers*.
3. The "Old Church" was taken down in 1837. The Rooster which braved the storms of more than eighty winters, has been placed upon the spire of the Methodist Church. The old bell was presented to a Unitarian Society in Medway. The Provincial Congress held its sessions during the summer of 1775, in this Church, and General Warren presided over their deliberations.

